

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended): An orthopedic implantable device articulately connecting a first spinal vertebra to an adjacent second spinal vertebra comprising:

    a pair of first components adapted to be attached to locations left and right of a midline of said first vertebra, respectively;

    a pair of second components adapted to be attached to locations left and right of a midline of said second vertebra, respectively; and

    wherein each of said first components comprises a body and a male articulation member attached to said first component body and each of said second components comprises a body and a female articulation member attached to said second component body and wherein said first components are articulately connected to said second components by engaging said male articulation members to said female articulation members, thereby articulately connecting said first vertebra to said second vertebra along lines left and right of said midlines, respectively; and

wherein said male articulation member comprises a hook and said female articulation member comprises a loop.

2. (canceled)

3. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein each of said first component bodies further comprises a female articulation member.

4. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein each of said second component bodies further comprises a male articulation member.

5. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein said locations of said first and second vertebrae are selected from a group consisting of a pedicle, transverse processes, facets, pars interarticularis, intervertebral disc, lamina, and vertebral body.
6. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein said bodies of said pair of first components are attached to first and second pedicles of said first vertebra, respectively, and said bodies of said pair of second components are attached to first and second pedicles of said second vertebra, respectively.
7. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 6 wherein said pairs of first and second components are attached to said first and second vertebrae, respectively, via connectors selected from a group consisting of screws, wires, and hooks.
8. (previously presented): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein said pair of first components are articulately connected to said pair of second components via a hinge.
9. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein said pairs of first and second components have adjustable length.
10. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 9 wherein said length of said first and second components can be adjusted between 10 and 200 millimeters.
11. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein said female articulation members are formed within said second component bodies and comprise a bar connecting opposite sides of a cavity formed within a surface of the body.

12. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 comprising a material selected from a group consisting of metal, plastic, ceramic, bone, polymers, composites, absorbable material, biodegradable material, and combinations thereof.

13. (currently amended): A spine stabilization method articulately connecting a first vertebra to a second vertebra comprising:

providing a pair of first components wherein each of said first components comprises a body and a male articulation member attached to said first component body ;

adjusting the length of said bodies of said first components;

attaching said pair of first components to locations left and right of a midline of said first vertebra, respectively ;

providing a pair of second components wherein each of said second components comprises a body and a female articulation member attached to said second component body;

adjusting the length of said bodies of said second components;

attaching said pair of second components to locations left and right of a midline of said second vertebra, respectively; and

articulately connecting said pair of first component to said pair of second component by engaging said male articulation member to said female articulation member.

14. (currently amended): A spine stabilization method connecting a first vertebra to a second vertebra comprising:

attaching first and second screws to first and second locations left and right of a midline of said first vertebra, respectively;

attaching third and fourth screws to first and second locations left and right of a midline of said second vertebra, respectively;

providing a pair of first components each first component comprising a body and a male articulation member attached to said first component body;

providing a pair of second components each of said second components comprising a body and a female articulation member attached to said second component body;

articulately connecting said first components to said second components by engaging said male articulation members to said female articulation members;

adjusting the length of said bodies of said first and second components;

attaching said bodies of said first components to said first and second locations of said first vertebra via said first and second screws, respectively;

attaching said bodies of said second components to said first and second locations of said second vertebra via said third and fourth screws, respectively; and  
tightening of all said screws.

15. (canceled)

16. (original): The orthopedic implantable device of claim 1 wherein said first and second vertebrae are selected from a group consisting of cervical, thoracic, lumbar and sacrum vertebrae.

17. (new): An orthopedic implantable device articulately connecting a first spinal vertebra to an adjacent second spinal vertebra comprising:

a pair of first components adapted to be attached to locations left and right of a midline of said first vertebra, respectively;

a pair of second components adapted to be attached to locations left and right of a midline of said second vertebra, respectively;

wherein each of said first components comprises a body and a male articulation member attached to said first component body and each of said second components comprises a body and a female articulation member attached to said second component body and wherein said first components are articulately connected to said second components by engaging said male articulation members to said female articulation members, thereby articulately connecting said first vertebra to said second vertebra along lines left and right of said midlines, respectively; and

wherein said female articulation members are formed within said second component bodies and comprise a bar connecting opposite sides of a cavity formed within a surface of the body.

18. (new): An orthopedic implantable device articulately connecting a first spinal vertebra to an adjacent second spinal vertebra comprising:

a pair of first components adapted to be attached to locations left and right of a midline of said first vertebra, respectively;

a pair of second components adapted to be attached to locations left and right of a midline of said second vertebra, respectively;

wherein each of said first components comprises a body and a male articulation member attached to said first component body and each of said second components comprises a body and a female articulation member attached to said second component body and wherein said first components are articulately connected to said second components by engaging said male articulation members to said female articulation members, thereby articulately connecting said first vertebra to said second vertebra along lines left and right of said midlines, respectively; and

wherein said pairs of first and second components have adjustable length.